

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1-24. (Canceled)

25. (New) A method for enhancing decidualization and fertility in an animal, comprising administering to said animal an effective amount of IL-11 and IL-11R $\alpha$  to agonize the interaction between IL-11 and IL-11R $\alpha$ .

26. (New) A method for enhancing fertility in a female animal, comprising administering to said animal an effective amount of (a) IL-11 or a functional derivative thereof and (b) IL-11R $\alpha$  or a functional derivative thereof, to agonize the interaction between IL-11 and IL-11R $\alpha$  thereby enhancing decidualization.

27. (New) A method for enhancing fertility in a female animal, comprising administering to said animal an effective amount of (a) a nucleic acid molecule encoding IL-11 or a functional derivative thereof and (b) a nucleic acid molecule encoding IL-11R $\alpha$  or a functional derivative thereof.